

OCT 26 1971

MPs Stymie

Veterans'

Peace Group

SFChronicle

A platoon of MPs in riot gear yesterday blocked about 50 Vietnam Veterans for Peace who came to the Presidio to hold a memorial service at the cemetery there.

The peace group had earlier been denied a permit by Presidio officials on the grounds that the group is "political." The veterans took their case to court, but U.S. District Judge Samuel Conti ruled that "the military has the power to control who comes on its installation and this court should not interfere."

As the veterans approached the Presidio gate at Arguello and Jackson streets, about 25 MPs trotted out to block the way. Fifteen more waited in the background.

San Francisco police officers waited outside the gate. At the right side of the gate, the veterans crowded against the line of MPs to talk with officials.

At one point, there was

See Back Page

Presidio Rebuffs Vets Peace Group

From Page 1

some jostling and a blind veteran was knocked to the ground in the crush. He was identified as Joe Smith, 21, of 270 Turk street, and was not hurt.

At the gate, the Presidio's provost marshal, Lieutenant Colonel Jim Harageones, denied the group permission to enter the installation.

Jack McCloskey, president of the veterans group, asked if they could enter "as individuals."

"You cannot enter the installation; we're sorry about that," Harageones replied.

"My husband was killed in Vietnam — I would like very much to memorialize him," said Judith Drowes Keyes, who was scheduled to speak at the memorial service.

REFUSAL

Harageones refused again. A Presidio information officer, Lieutenant Colonel Bernard Powell, stepped forward and said, "As individuals marching together, you are a group. You are using a semantic argument."

Captain Daniel Quinlan of the San Francisco Police Department told the group they would be allowed to speak and stay if there were no violence.

The veterans then asked Quinlan's permission to lay a wreath they had brought outside the gate. It was granted.

SERVICE

They held a five-minute service, then a press conference about Sunday's scuffle with police at the Veterans Day Parade, in which their float was stopped a block from the reviewing stand.

Lee Thorn, who was treated at Kaiser Foundation Hospital for facial lacerations, said at least six members of the group were injured seriously enough to require treatment.

Captain Ernest Raabe, who commanded police at the parade, later said his men had acted properly and with "the least amount of extra effort." As for the peace group, "Their antics were disgusting," he said.